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**LARRY CRAIG**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
August 1, 2008

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## **CRAIG APPLAUDS INCLUSION IN BIPARTISAN ENERGY BILL OF HIS PROPOSAL TO LIFT OFFSHORE EXPLORATION BAN**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Idaho Senator Larry Craig today applauded the inclusion in a new bipartisan compromise energy proposal of his bill to lift the oil and gas exploration moratorium in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico to within 50 miles off the coast of Florida.

Craig, who first introduced S. 875, his bipartisan legislation with Senator Byron Dorgan of South Dakota in March of 2007, said, “I’m encouraged that the ‘Group of 10’ Senators who announced comprehensive energy legislation today understand the problem of keeping these offshore areas off limits to exploration and production and have included my language in their bill.”

Three months ago, Craig reintroduced his legislation, S. 2593, the Domestic Offshore Energy Security Act, and had filed it as an amendment to S. 3268, the energy speculation bill under consideration by the full Senate. His amendment was denied a vote, however, when the Senate Democratic leadership decision blocked any production amendments from being offered to their bill.

Craig criticized the Senate’s Democratic leadership for not permitting a full debate with open amendments on legislation to reduce gas and other energy prices, before the Congress adjourned for the August State work period.

“I’m hopeful that the bipartisan compromise energy legislation announced today will provide the opportunity for the Senate in September to get serious about putting into place a national energy policy that will develop our domestic energy resources, lessen our dependence on foreign countries for our energy needs and provide for fast tracking alternative energy sources,” Craig said.

The bipartisan plan introduced today by Senators Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson of Georgia, John Thune of South Dakota, Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Bob Corker of Tennessee, Kent Conrad of North Dakota, Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor of Arkansas also includes incentives for coal-to-liquids plant construction and nuclear energy development and production.